

full whistleblower rights to FAA employees in 2000.

I urge my colleagues to once again protect our Federal whistleblowers by providing full and explicit whistleblower protection to employees in the Department of Homeland Security. I urge my colleagues to oppose the Gramm-Miller amendment and support the Lieberman substitute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Who yields time?

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, could the Chair indicate how much time is remaining on each side?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute to the Senator from Connecticut, and 7 minutes to the Senator from Texas.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. LIEBERMAN. Madam President, let me conclude in the moment I have remaining. I have the feeling this will not be the last moment I or other Members will have to discuss the Graham-Miller substitute or the question of protections for Federal workers.

There is a significant disagreement about the protections for homeland security workers. I do think, as we talk about the Nelson-Chafee-Breaux compromise, which I support, that it will be seen that it not only gives some protection to Federal workers, particularly those who are currently unionized and will be transferred to the new building, but it leaves the President with the last word on matters of national security. Let not the debate on that matter obscure the fact that, as Senator GRAMM himself has said, 95 percent of his substitute is the same as our committee bill. So let's settle the small point of disagreement and get the rest that we agree on done.

I believe my time has expired.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CLINTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Nevada.

Mr. REID. Madam President, I have a unanimous consent request which I have informed the minority I am going to propound at this time. Senator NELSON has been designated as Senator DASCHLE's designee. I ask unanimous consent that following my unanimous consent request—and I understand there will be an objection—Senator

NELSON be recognized to offer an amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1140

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent, on behalf of Senator DASCHLE, that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 210, S. 1140, the motor vehicle franchise contracts bill; that the bill be read three times, passed, and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table; and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD, without intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. BENNETT. Madam President, I have no objection to this request, but I understand there is a Senator on this side who wants to review it further, and on his behalf I object at this time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska is recognized.

AMENDMENT NO. 4740 TO AMENDMENT NO. 4738

(Purpose: To modify certain personnel provisions, and for other purposes)

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I call up my amendment at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Nebraska [Mr. NELSON], for himself, Mr. CHAFEE, and Mr. BREAUX, proposes an amendment numbered 4740 to amendment No. 4738.

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The text of the amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. NELSON of Nebraska. Madam President, I am pleased to join with my friends, Senator JOHN BREAUX of Louisiana and Senator LINCOLN CHAFEE of Rhode Island, in helping break the stalemate on the labor-management issues that have held up the homeland security legislation. We need to move forward and pass a bill that provides real security for all Americans without the distractions of labor-management issues.

This legislation is a huge undertaking, and the reorganization will certainly not be accomplished overnight.

That being said, we need to get to it right now because the later we come back to try to do this, the more difficult it will be. We need to do it right

because unscrambling the eggs is impossible.

The new Department will not begin well if it begins with a staff who feels their concerns have been ignored. We now have the opportunity to break that logjam. This compromise addresses the concerns of both sides. The agreement preserves the Presidential authority to exempt union employees from collective bargaining as employees of the Department of Homeland Security. It also grants the President historic personnel flexibility, giving him the authority to hire, fire, promote, demote, and to rewrite civil service laws in the area of performance appraisals, classifications, pay rates and systems, and adverse action.

The agreement provides binding arbitration on personnel flexibility. All sides will have a seat at the table during the development of the new personnel rules and any disagreements over the rules will be referred to the Federal Service Impasse Panel, which will have the authority to set the rules and resolve disputes. This is modeled after the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act of 1998, which is current law.

The Federal Service Impasse Panel has discretion to impose new rules to break this agreement. This is existing law. It is the way in which we ought to proceed.

I know this amendment will receive broad bipartisan support, and I hope those of us who seek to complete action on this important legislation will support this effort to clear one of the major hurdles that has been currently blocking our progress so we can move forward on this important and vital security matter currently before us.

I ask for the support of my colleagues, and I hope we will move forward on this as soon as we possibly can. There is no reason to delay this legislation any longer.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. BREAUX. Madam President, I support the amendment to the Gramm-Miller amendment which has been offered by our good friend and colleague Senator NELSON, and by my colleague Senator LINCOLN CHAFEE. It is very clear the Senate, as we debate homeland security, has reached a point where we are at a logjam. I, for one, and I think the vast majority of our colleagues, strongly support the creation of a Homeland Security Department, and why is very simple.

In light of today's terrorist threat to this country, we can no longer continue to operate and protect our Nation's security in the way we always have. In the past, too often the right hand did not know what the left hand was doing, and vice versa. It is clear, from the evidence that has now been presented, we have agencies within our own Government that had certain amounts of information that was important information, but information they did not adequately share with other Departments and agencies within our Government.